

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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*****For Immediate Release*****

Date: June 3, 2006 / 2:30 p.m.
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UPDATE:

Lakewood Man Arrested From I-5 Pileup

A Lakewood man turned himself in to the Washington State Patrol after he fled from the scene of the 18 car pileup yesterday on Interstate 5 (I-5) between Gravelly Lake Drive and Thorne Lane.

On June 3rd at approximately 10:00 a.m. 33 year-old Mathew Lee Gustamante of Lakewood called the State Patrol and advised that he wanted to confess to being the driver of the vehicle that left the scene that seriously injured a Tacoma Man. Gustamante was driving a white 1984 Toyota Camry when he struck a 66 year-old Daniel Crotty who was driving a silver Ford F-150. Crotty's pickup was pushed into and underneath a stopped semi-trailer. Crotty is in stable condition suffering from serious injuries at Madigan Army Hospital.

A State Patrol Detective interviewed Gustamante at his home and inspected the vehicle he was driving. Based on the evidence at the scene and Gustamante's confession, investigators arrested Gustamante and he was booked into the Pierce County Jail for Felony Hit and Run and Driving Without a Valid Driver's License.

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18 Car Pileup Seriously Injures Tacoma Man On I-5 In Pierce County

One seriously injured and several minor injuries in at least five separate collisions, involving 18 vehicles, on southbound Interstate 5 (I-5) between Gravelly Lake Drive and Thorne Lane in Pierce County.

The June 2nd incident occurred approximately 12:45 p.m. when the State Patrol received calls about a multiple car collision southbound I-5 at Gravelly Lake Dr. According to witnesses, it had been raining hard prior to the collisions but was not raining at the time of the collisions. A car-hauler was traveling southbound I-5 when it lost control and jack-knifed colliding with two other vehicles. This sent off a chain reaction of collisions involving seven semi-trucks and 11 other vehicles. There were several minor injuries and with vehicles blocking all lanes of southbound I-5. 66 year-old Daniel K. Crotty of Tacoma was seriously injured when his Ford F-150 was struck

from behind and push underneath a semi-trailer. He was transported to Madigan Army Hospital and is in serious but stable condition. The vehicle that struck Crotty has yet to be identified and Troopers are treating this as a Felony Hit and Run due to Crotty's injuries.

Department of Transportation cameras were recording the area at the time of the collisions and may have captured the entire collision scene as it unfolded. Investigators will be studying this footage to identify the vehicle that fled from the scene. The roadway was completely blocked for approximately two hours until troopers could open up two lanes. The entire roadway was opened at 4:50 p.m.. Southbound I-5 was backed up as far as 72nd St. on I-5 and the northbound backups were as far back as Dupont. Several of the drivers involved did receive traffic infractions for not controlling their speed as well as at least two for not wearing seatbelts.

If anyone has any information about this collision or may have witnessed the collision please call the Washington State Patrol at (253) 536-4386.

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